

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Version # \_\_\_\_\_

APP # 700268

## **1. Project Description**

### **A. Statement of GO Activity**

The El Mirage Grounds Operation Project funds work activities for onsite visitor services along with the normal operations and maintenance activities required to sustain OHV recreation opportunities. BLM Staff, Maintenance Workers and Park Rangers work to clean restrooms and maintain facilities such as roads, signs, kiosks, fences and vehicle barriers. Non Law Enforcement Park Rangers and Volunteers work together to provide seamless visitor services including directions, emergency services and visitor contacts for voluntary compliance with the rules and regulations. Extra staffing is provided over holiday weekends and during special events. Visitor services field work is overseen and coordinated through the activities of dispatchers providing their services from the Inter-Agency Dispatch Center. Visitor contacts would focus on explaining and seeking voluntary compliance for all California OHV and resource protection laws.

One of the most valuable activities this project funds is the work done on site by our Volunteer Coordinator. This position coordinates recreation project area day to day management, and long-term activities, with the BLM Barstow Field Office and our stakeholders. Staff Recreation Planners also provide valuable supporting work for the project. These two positions work activities include project coordination, scheduling, web pages, environmental compliance review, monitoring partner activities, administering volunteer program, overseeing visitor center operations, addressing community issues and all similar routine activities. Project administration and supervision are provided by the Barstow Staff, including time & attendance, environmental assessments, procurement vehicle & property management.

More work activities in this project include maintenance of the 27 mile long perimeter barrier, several miles of internal protective fencing (roads, Joshua trees, mines and cultural sites), 2 miles of paved road, 12 miles of maintained dirt roads, 18 and 13-mile signed loop trails, 10 vault toilets and hundreds of various types & size signs. We have volunteers doing different type work; some help manage the dry lakebed, others clean restrooms, repair fences, pickup trash and staff visitor center. We have staff Wildlife Biologist and Soil Specialist scheduled to perform project monitoring and updates to our soil and HMP plans. We also provide support work for Friends of El Mirage for grading and maintaining roads and trails.

### **B. Relation of Proposed Project to OHV Recreation**

The El Mirage OHV Recreation Area was created primarily to provide opportunities for off-highway vehicle recreation for San Bernardino County and the greater S. Calif. area. To date about 12,000 acres of private land have been acquired with green sticker grants, and added to existing public land creating this 25,850 acre riding area. This Project provides the visitor services and facility maintenance needed to sustain OHV recreation on public land. Many of these facilities were built with monies from previous green sticker grants. Visitor contact and support services are provided by staff at the visitor center and through routine patrols of the recreation area. This Project provides basic visitor services for people staging, camping and riding OHVs here today and tomorrow.

Additional Project work takes care of infrastructure built to manage, contain and support OHV recreation. Maintaining the perimeter barrier delineates the legal riding opportunity and prevents trespass. Maintaining the access road network facilitates visitor and emergency vehicle travel and distribution throughout the recreation area. Maintaining the signs, restrooms and protective fencing sustains a clean healthy setting. And behind the scenes more work activities address the management and protection of sensitive desert resources. Wildlife guzzlers are routinely inspected, soil and road conditions are monitored, special status species are inventoried, permits are issued and NEPA documents are prepared for a steady stream of special events.

### **C. Size of the Project**

The El Mirage OHV Recreation Area contains 25,850 acres designated open for legal OHV recreation.

### **D. Location and description of OHV opportunities**

The El Mirage Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Recreation Area is located in the Mojave Desert along the western edge of San

Bernardino County, which makes it the closest OHV open area recreation experience to the greater Los Angeles area. This area includes a 5,000 acre dry lakebed perfect for beginning riders, go carts and a variety of special & homemade vehicle types with minimal suspension. From the lakebed the land rises gently across thousands of acres of excellent terrain for intermediate riding to the low lying Shadow Mountains, which bisect the recreation area. The Shadow Mountains offer a variety of terrain and riding opportunities. This ranges from easy routes up the washes, to intermediate trails across the ridges, interspersed with expert hillclimbs.

## 2. Rerouting Requirements

### Rerouting

(a) Does your project involve rerouting of any roads and trails? ☐ Yes ☒ No

If response to question (a) is 'Yes', a Project timeline, conceptual drawings and site plans are required (See 'Attachments' tab at the top of the screen)

If response to question (a) is 'No', skip details related to rerouting

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1. **Project Timeline (Required if project includes necessary rerouting)**
2. **Conceptual Drawings and Site Plans (Required if project includes necessary rerouting)**
3. **Project-Specific Maps**  
Attachments: [El Mirage GO Facilities](#)
4. **Optional Project-Specific Application Documents**

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
Agency: BLM - Barstow Field Office  
Application: El Mirage OHV Ground Operations

6/2/2009

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:		Version # _____	APP # _____
<b>APPLICANT NAME :</b>	BLM - Barstow Field Office		
<b>PROJECT TITLE :</b>	El Mirage OHV Ground Operations	<b>PROJECT NUMBER (Division use only) :</b>	
<b>PROJECT TYPE :</b>	<div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Acquisition</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Development</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Education &amp; Safety</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ground Operations</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Law Enforcement</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Planning</div> <div style="width: 50%;"><input type="checkbox"/> Restoration</div> </div>		
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION :</b>	<p>The El Mirage Grounds Operation Project funds work activities for onsite visitor services along with the normal operations and maintenance activities required to sustain OHV recreation opportunities. BLM Staff, Maintenance Workers and Park Rangers work to clean restrooms and maintain facilities such as roads, signs, kiosks, fences and vehicle barriers. Non Law Enforcement Park Rangers and Volunteers work together to provide seamless visitor services including directions, emergency services and visitor contacts for voluntary compliance with the rules and regulations. Extra staffing is provided over holiday weekends and during special events. Visitor services field work is overseen and coordinated through the activities of dispatchers providing their services from the Inter-Agency Dispatch Center. Visitor contacts would focus on explaining and seeking voluntary compliance for all California OHV and resource protection laws.</p> <p>One of the most valuable activities this project funds is the work done on site by our Volunteer Coordinator. This position coordinates recreation project area day to day management, and long-term activities, with the BLM Barstow Field Office and our stakeholders. Staff Recreation Planners also provide valuable supporting work for the project. These two positions work activities include project coordination, scheduling, web pages, environmental compliance review, monitoring partner activities, administering volunteer program, overseeing visitor center operations, addressing community issues and all similar routine activities. Project administration and supervision are provided by the Barstow Staff, including time &amp; attendance, environmental assessments, procurement vehicle &amp; property management.</p> <p>More work activities in this project include maintenance of the 27 mile long perimeter barrier, several miles of internal protective fencing (roads, Joshua trees, mines and cultural sites), 2 miles of paved road, 12 miles of maintained dirt roads, 18 and 13-mile signed loop trails, 10 vault toilets and hundreds of various types &amp; size signs. We have volunteers doing different type work; some help manage the dry lakebed, others clean restrooms, repair fences, pickup trash and staff visitor center. We have staff Wildlife Biologist and Soil Specialist scheduled to perform project monitoring and updates to our soil and HMP plans. We also provide support work for Friends of El Mirage for grading and maintaining roads and trails.</p>		

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
<b>DIRECT EXPENSES</b>							
<b>Program Expenses</b>							
1	<b>Staff</b>						
	Park Attendant Notes : This cost reflects 3 positions working at the visitor center for 1 year, collecting entry fees and providing visitor services.	4160.000	28.000	HRS	58,240.00	58,240.00	116,480.00
	Other-Recreatio Planner Notes : This cost reflects the cumulative project recreation planning	1040.000	53.000	HRS	27,560.00	27,560.00	55,120.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
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6/2/2009

	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	work by BLM staff for 1 year.						
	Maintenance Worker Notes : Full time dedicated project position.	2080.000	38.000	HRS	39,520.00	39,520.00	79,040.00
	Other-Volunteer Maintenance Notes : This cost includes general project maintenanc by several volunteers during one year; about equal to 2.3 full time positions.	2880.000	38.000	HRS	0.00	109,440.00	109,440.00
	Other-Volunteer Coordinator	1040.000	40.000	HRS	0.00	41,600.00	41,600.00
	Other-Lakebed Volunteer Maintenance Notes : Annual donated work by Southern California Timing Association to maintain smooth lakebed.	1500.000	40.000	HRS	0.00	60,000.00	60,000.00
	Other-Wildlife Biologist	180.000	53.000	HRS	4,770.00	4,770.00	9,540.00
	Other-Soil Specialist	180.000	53.000	HRS	4,770.00	4,770.00	9,540.00
	Other-Dispatcher	500.000	38.000	HRS	9,500.00	9,500.00	19,000.00
	<b>Total for Staff</b>				144,360.00	355,400.00	499,760.00
<b>2</b>	<b>Contracts</b>						
	Other-Vault toilet pumping	20.000	300.000	EA	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
<b>3</b>	<b>Materials / Supplies</b>						
	Other-signs	300.000	24.000	EA	0.00	7,200.00	7,200.00
	Other-Toilet paper, case Notes : 96 rolls per PKG, average use 2 PKGs week.	100.000	50.000	PKG	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
	Trash Bags	40.000	75.000	PKG	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00
	<b>Total for Materials / Supplies</b>				0.00	15,200.00	15,200.00
<b>4</b>	<b>Equipment Use Expenses</b>						
	Other-Pickup truck	2000.000	40.000	DAY	0.00	80,000.00	80,000.00

Project Cost Estimate for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
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	Line Item	Qty	Rate	UOM	Grant Request	Match	Total
	Other-Tractor	400.000	40.000	HRS	0.00	16,000.00	16,000.00
	Other-Heavy Equip, dump, skip	400.000	40.000	HRS	0.00	16,000.00	16,000.00
	Total for Equipment Use Expenses				0.00	112,000.00	112,000.00
5	Equipment Purchases						
6	Others						
7	Administrative Costs						
	Administrative Costs-Branch Manager	200.000	65.000	HRS	6,500.00	6,500.00	13,000.00
	Administrative Costs-Budget/Procurement	200.000	40.000	HRS	4,000.00	4,000.00	8,000.00
	Total for Administrative Costs				10,500.00	10,500.00	21,000.00
Total Program Expenses					154,860.00	499,100.00	653,960.00
TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES					154,860.00	499,100.00	653,960.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES					154,860.00	499,100.00	653,960.00

Project Cost Summary for Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program - 2008/2009  
Agency: BLM - Barstow Field Office  
Application: El Mirage OHV Ground Operations

6/2/2009

	Line Item	Grant Request	Match	Total	Narrative
<b>DIRECT EXPENSES</b>					
<b>Program Expenses</b>					
1	Staff	144,360.00	355,400.00	499,760.00	
2	Contracts	0.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	
3	Materials / Supplies	0.00	15,200.00	15,200.00	
4	Equipment Use Expenses	0.00	112,000.00	112,000.00	
5	Equipment Purchases	0.00	0.00	0.00	
6	Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	
7	Administrative Costs	10,500.00	10,500.00	21,000.00	
<b>Total Program Expenses</b>		154,860.00	499,100.00	653,960.00	
<b>TOTAL DIRECT EXPENSES</b>		154,860.00	499,100.00	653,960.00	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>		<b>154,860.00</b>	<b>499,100.00</b>	<b>653,960.00</b>	

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**ITEM 1 and ITEM 2**

**ITEM 1**

- a. ITEM 1 - Has a CEQA Notice of Determination (NOD) been filed for the Project? ☐ Yes ☒ No  
(Please select Yes or No)

**ITEM 2**

- b. ITEM 2 - Are the proposed activities a "Project" under CEQA Guidelines Section 15378? ☒ Yes ☐ No  
(Please select Yes or No)
- c. The Application is requesting funds solely for personnel and support to enforce OHV laws and ensure public safety. These activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No
- d. Other. Explain why proposed activities would not cause any physical impacts on the environment and are thus not a "Project" under CEQA. DO NOT complete ITEMS 3 – 9

**ITEM 3 - Impact of this Project on Wetlands**

This project would have no impact on wetlands or navigable water because there are none in the project area. Some of the proposed activities could impact desert tortoise. A Formal Consultation on the desert tortoise regarding the Management Plan of the El Mirage Cooperative Management Area and terms and conditions have been developed which will help avoid and minimize any impacts to desert tortoise. No other sensitive habitats or species would be impacted by the project.

**ITEM 4 - Cumulative Impacts of this Project**

This is a ground operations project to fund continued routine maintenance and operation of existing facilities and services. We determined the potential impacts from these routine activities are nominal and therefore determined this project qualifies for a categorical exclusion. The cumulative impact assessment in the environmental assessment for the El Mirage OHV Recreation Area documents this conclusion on page 30. In the big picture this project helps sustain legal OHV recreation opportunities and minimize potential harmful impacts by providing a managed setting. Furthermore, this project helps reduce potential harmful impacts from OHVs riding on private property or in closed areas.

**ITEM 5 - Soil Impacts**

There is a very low possibility the proposed activities will have a significant effect on slopes or soils because our routine maintenance and operations do not involve work on steep slopes or highly erosive soils. The facilities at El Mirage were located to avoid problems such as this. Planned work activities in this project include measuring and monitoring soils within the recreation area to update and ensure compliance with our soils management plan. Included in this project is staff work to support Friends of El Mirage efforts to maintain access roads, which helps direct traffic to sustainable surfaces and minimize the potential for multiple paths.

**ITEM 6 - Damage to Scenic Resources**

There is no potential for damage to scenic resources within the viewshed of a state scenic highway because there are no scenic highways in the vicinity of El Mirage.

**ITEM 7 - Hazardous Materials**

- Is the proposed Project Area located on a site included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code (hazardous materials)? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the location of the hazard relative to the Project site, the level of hazard and the measures to be

taken to minimize or avoid the hazards.

**ITEM 8 - Potential for Adverse Impacts to Historical or Cultural Resources**

Would the proposed Project have potential for any substantial adverse impacts to historical or cultural resources? (Please select Yes or No) ☐ Yes ☒ No

If YES, describe the potential impacts and for any substantially adverse changes in the significance of historical or cultural resources and measures to be taken to minimize or avoid the impacts.

**ITEM 9 - Indirect Significant Impacts**

There is no potential for this project to cause indirect significant impacts because all the activities in this project are minor with no or nominal surface disturbances. The work consists of routine on-going maintenance and operations of existing facilities and services inside the OHV recreation area. Most likely, continued maintenance and operations in this project will result in an attractive setting that will continue to draw OHV riders to this area thereby, avoiding preventing user groups to go elsewhere or cause off-site impacts.

**CEQA/NEPA Attachment**

Attachments:

[El Mirage Categorical Exclusion](#)

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**1. Project Cost Estimate - Q 1. (Auto populates from Cost Estimate)**

1. As calculated on the Project Cost Estimate, the percentage of the cost of the Project covered by the Applicant is 10

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☒ 76% or more (10 points)  
☐ 51% - 75% (5 points)  
☐ 26% - 50% (3 points)  
☐ 25% (Match minimum) (No points)

**2. Failure to Complete - Q 2.**

2. Failure to complete the Project would result in: 7

(Check all that apply) : Maximum of 8 points (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Loss of OHV Opportunity (6 points)  
☐ Negative impact to cultural sites (2 points)  
☐ Damage to special-status species or other sensitive habitat (2 points)  
☐ Potential trespass (2 points)  
☒ Additional damage to Facilities (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

This project maintains protective barriers around sensitive cultural sites in the Shadow Mountains. Preventive activities include web pages, kiosks, brochures, and visitor contacts by LE Rangers and non-LE Park Rangers. Special-status species and sensitive habitat in the vicinity of the OHV Recreation Area are protected by a multi-layer approach involving outreach, interpretation, visitor contacts and physical barriers. Trespass was the biggest issue and nearly closed El Mirage to OHVs. We work hard with local communities and stakeholders on a program to prevent and control trespass. We see a correlation between on-site presence and vandalism to facilities. The higher staff presence and the better the facilities are maintained the less they are vandalized. This work is necessary to prevent the loss of OHV opportunity.

**3. Sustain OHV Opportunity - Q 3.**

3. The Project would sustain OHV Opportunity by 13

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Maintaining trail or road tread (5 points)  
☒ Installing or repairing erosion control features (3 points)  
☒ Providing traffic control and/or educational signage (3 points)  
☒ Maintaining multi use (ATV, Dirt Bikes, 4x4, etc) (1 point)  
☒ Providing varied levels of riding difficulty (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

- a. 12 miles of access roads maintained on a regular basis; grading, dust control and compaction. Provide access for vehicles with OHVs, campers, motorhomes and trucks towing trailers. This project funds compete maintenance on a regular schedule, including control dust and compact road surfaces.
- b. Project includes clearing drainage channels and culverts. There are a few earthen drainage channels built decades ago. These need to be cleaned and maintained where intersect primary road system.
- c. Maintenance activities for the recreation area include upkeep and replacement of traffic control signs such as stop, speed limits, riding restrictions, plus signage for interpretation, rules & regulations and educational & safety messages.
- d. This project is used for many activities including ATVs, RUVs, dirt bikes, 4x4s, sandrails, Rhinos, mini-bikes, dualsports, dune buggies and custom vehicles use the lakebed and surrounding mtns.

**4. Public Input - Q 4.**

4. The Project was developed with public input employing the following 2

(Check all that apply) : Maximum of 2 points (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Meeting(s) with the general public to discuss Project (1 point)
- ☐ Conference call(s) with interested parties (1 point)
- ☒ Meeting(s) with stakeholders (1 point)

Explain each statement that was checked

- a. This project was presented in public meetings with the OHV Leadership Team and the Wilderness Leaders Meeting, sponsored by California Wilderness Coalition at the BLM CDD Office. These meetings were held to gather public input used for developing our grant projects.
- c. Operations and maintenance activities for El Mirage were extensively reviewed during preparation of the project management plan, approved 1990. Now the general public has an opportunity every month to comment at the meetings with the Friends of El Mirage, held at the El Mirage Visitor Center. This project was developed with public input from the last couple of meetings, along with the other El Mirage projects. These meetings were attended by representatives from a range of activities including OHV groups, motorized sports, competitive racing, commercial filming, local homeowners, business interest, environmental interest and clubs for non-motorized sports.

**5. Utilization of Partnerships - Q 5.**

5. The Project will utilize partnerships to successfully accomplish the Project. The number of partner organizations that will participate in the Project are 4

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☒ 4 or more (4 points)
- ☐ 2 to 3 (2 points)
- ☐ 1 (1 point)
- ☐ None (No points)

List partner organization(s):

Friends of El Mirage  
AMA District 37  
Southern California Timing Association  
San Bernardino County Parks Department  
Los Angeles County OHV Parks Department

**6. Impact to Natural and Cultural Resources - Q 6.**

6. The Project will avoid and/or minimize impact to natural and cultural resources by 5

(Check all that apply) : Maximum of 7 points (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Maintaining physical barriers to control OHV use (1 point)
- ☐ Protecting water quality (1 point)
- ☐ Providing bridges instead of wet crossings where appropriate (1 point)

- ☒ Protecting special-status species (1 point)
- ☒ Re-routing trails to divert away from riparian/wetlands areas (1 point)
- ☒ Providing sanitary facilities (1 point)
- ☒ Protecting cultural site(s) (1 point)
- ☐ Site design precludes the need for the above measures (7 points)

Explain each statement that was checked

- a. Project maintains 27 miles of perimeter fence to control OHV use, to protect private property & sensitive desert resources on public lands closed to motorized travel.
- d. Project maintains northern perimeter fence, a mandatory term and condition in our Section 7 Consultation Package with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service regarding the Desert Tortoise.
- e. This project maintains signs, fences and alternative roads to divert traffic away from the 5,000 acre dry lakebed from vehicle use while it is wet.
- f. There are ten vault toilets within the recreation area that need ongoing maintenance.
- g. There are sensitive cultural sites protected by fences and barriers within the OHV Recreation area. These include both historic and prehistoric resources. This project includes fence maintenance, plus routine Visitor Service patrols along with staff and volunteer monitoring.

**7. Recycled Materials - Q 7.**

7. The Project incorporates recycled materials by utilizing 4

(Check all that apply) (Please select applicable values)

- ☒ Barrier materials which include recycled content or materials obtained onsite (1 point)
- ☒ Signs, sign posts or education kiosks which use products with recycled content (1 point)
- ☐ Erosion control features which use materials with recycled content (1 point)
- ☒ Paper used for trail maps which includes recycled content (1 point)
- ☒ Other products with recycled content (Specify) (1 point) [Construction materials in visitor center]

**8. Sustainable Technologies - Q 8.**

8. The Project makes substantial use of sustainable technologies such as 4

- Alternative fuel vehicles and equipment
- Renewable energy sources (e.g., solar, wind)
- Low volatile organic compound emission materials (e.g., paint, sealants, carpet)
- Low flow plumbing fixtures
- Water efficient landscaping

(Check the one most appropriate) (Please select one from list)

- ☐ No (No points) ☒ Yes (4 points)

Explain 'Yes' response

All of our facilities use sustainable technologies, starting with bolt together construction so they are recycled at the end of their life cycle. This includes the perimeter barrier, visitor center, maintenance shop, vault toilets shade ramadas, fire rings and signs. We have nominal landscaping around the facilities, relying on native vegetation. Furthermore, about 93% of our natural vegetation is relatively undisturbed and captures carbon emissions from motorized vehicles ridden here.

The new El Mirage Visitor Center incorporated heating and cooling systems designed for desert use with high energy efficiency ratings. The entire facility uses low flow plumbing hardware and low wattage lighting. Organic compounds met the most stringent emission requirements. Public surfaces are made from natural materials and stainless steel which are easily cleaned with mild soil friendly detergents.

**9. Motorized Access - Q 9.**

9. The Project improves and/or maintains facilities that provide motorized access to the following non-motorized recreation opportunities 6

(Check all that apply) Scoring: 2 points each, up to a maximum of 6 points (Please select applicable values)

☒ Camping

☐ Birding

☒ Hiking

☐ Equestrian trails

☐ Fishing

☐ Rock Climbing

☒ Other (Specify) [Land sailing]